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**FOUNDER AND LEADER OF VIOLENT STREET GANG, THE 'BLOODS',  
SENTENCED TO 50 YEARS' IMPRISONMENT BY U.S. COURT**

JAMES B. COMEY, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced today that OMAR PORTEE, a/k/a "OG Mack" -- the founder and leader of the United Blood Nation, commonly known as the Bloods -- was sentenced today in Manhattan federal court to 50 years in prison on racketeering charges.

The Bloods is a violent street and prison gang that operates along the East Coast of the United States. PORTEE was convicted of racketeering and other charges on August 27, 2002, after a two-and-a-half month trial before United States District Judge NAOMI REICE BUCHWALD.

The proof at trial showed that PORTEE, who is known as, among other things, "OG Mack," "the Godfather of the New York Bloods," "the Almighty," "Death Row," and "Anybody Killer," founded the Bloods in 1993 while incarcerated on a weapons offense in the Rikers Island jail in order to amass power among the inmate population. After founding the Bloods, PORTEE and

other members of the Bloods organized the gang into smaller units or sub-groups, each of which is known as a "set." Each set has a different name. These sets include "One-Eight-Trey," "Sex, Money & Murder," and "Gangsta Killer Bloods."

According to the evidence, while incarcerated, PORTEE and other high-ranking members of the Bloods created a system of codes and hand signals, called "stacks," to communicate with each other. These codes and hand signals were initially established to allow members of the Bloods to communicate with each other in a way that hid the nature of their communications from prison officials. On the street, the codes and stacks were used to prevent any perceived enemy from understanding the Blood's communications.

Additionally, PORTEE created rules and regulations to govern the members of the Bloods. These regulations established a hierarchical membership structure and titles for leaders of the gang. For example, a member of the Bloods who has gained the respect of other members as a result of past criminal acts is called an "OG," which stands for "Original Gangsta." People with "OG" status direct and lead other Bloods and have the power to raise or lower a gang member's status. A member of the Bloods who has founded a set of the Bloods is called a "Godfather." Additionally, the evidence showed that members of the Bloods wear red and carry red bandannas to signal their allegiance to the gang.

According to the evidence at trial, PORTEE was involved

in multiple violent incidents while in prison. For example, in March 1996, PORTEE organized members of the Bloods in a planned attack on members of a rival gang, the Latin Kings. The plan culminated on March 12, 1996, with Portee and other members of the Bloods stabbing and slashing three other inmates with a Scrabble game piece sharpened into a spear and a second weapon.

In addition, according to the evidence at trial, when PORTEE was released from prison on June 22, 1999, he returned to 183<sup>rd</sup> Street and Davidson Avenue in the Bronx where he continued to preside over the affairs of the Bloods while also controlling the "One-Eight-Trey" set. PORTEE immediately began to consolidate control over the neighborhood, persuading people, including juveniles, to join the gang and commit violent and other criminal acts.

In this regard, PORTEE admitted in a videotaped conversation on February 20, 2001, that after he returned to the Bronx, he "brought... many burners," which is slang for guns, to the neighborhood in an effort to teach younger gang members "to fight." During this conversation, PORTEE also stated that, if he had a dispute with a Bloods member vying with him for power within the gang, he would have him "Peter Rolled," which is gang code for murdered.

In addition, the evidence at trial showed that soon after PORTEE returned to the Bronx, in October 1999, he agreed with and ordered other Bloods gang members to kill a rival nicknamed "K-Born." To further this conspiracy, PORTEE ordered a

juvenile to kill K-Born, telling the juvenile that the murder would serve as his initiation into the Bloods and providing him with a high-capacity, semiautomatic Tec-9 firearm. The juvenile and PORTEE's co-defendant, LEMREY ANDREWS, a/k/a "Pimp," approached K-Born's Bronx apartment door. ANDREWS, who held an AK-47 semi-automatic assault weapon during the incident, nodded to the juvenile, telling him to shoot. The juvenile unloaded his Tec-9 weapon into the door. K-Born was wounded, but survived. PORTEE, ANDREWS, and co-defendant GARY JACKSON, a/k/a "G," were each convicted at trial of this conspiracy to murder K-Born.

The jury also convicted PORTEE of assault in aid of racketeering. The evidence showed that in 2000, PORTEE ordered a low-level female gang member, or "soldier," to engage in credit card fraud and identity theft on multiple occasions in order to purchase luxury items for PORTEE and his girlfriend. When the soldier told PORTEE that she no longer wanted to engage in these crimes, PORTEE heated a knife on a stove and burned her leg severely, causing her permanent disfigurement. PORTEE was convicted of one count of conspiracy to commit credit card fraud and one count of conspiracy to commit identity theft, as well.

PORTEEE was also convicted of conspiring to distribute and distributing marijuana, and with conspiring to distribute crack cocaine. Among other things, the evidence included PORTEE's admissions during the February 20, 2001, videotaped conversation that he sold cocaine and heroin. During the same conversation, PORTEE accepted money for two pounds of marijuana.

PORTEE was convicted of 10 counts in total -- 1 count of racketeering, 1 count of racketeering conspiracy, 1 count of conspiracy to commit murder in aid of racketeering, 1 count of being a felon in possession of an AK-47 semi-automatic assault weapon, 1 count of assault in aid of racketeering, 1 count of conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine, 1 count of conspiracy to distribute marijuana, 1 count of the distribution of marijuana, 1 count of conspiracy to commit credit card fraud, and 1 count of conspiracy to commit identity theft.

ANDREWS was convicted of 7 counts - racketeering, racketeering conspiracy, conspiracy to commit murder in aid of racketeering, 2 counts related to the interstate transportation of women for the purpose of prostitution, and 2 firearms charges, both related to the possession of an AK-47 semi-automatic assault weapon. He faces a maximum sentence of life imprisonment and is scheduled to be sentenced on April 16, 2003, by Judge BUCHWALD.

JACKSON was convicted of 4 counts - racketeering conspiracy, conspiracy to commit murder in aid of racketeering, and two firearms charges. He faces a maximum sentence of life imprisonment and is scheduled to be sentenced on April 16, 2003, by Judge BUCHWALD.

PORTEE, JACKSON and ANDREWS were all originally

indicted on May 7, 2001, along with 12 others, including PAULETTE McCARTHA, a/k/a "P-Ditty," a/k/a "Big Mama," the leader of the female members of the Bloods, known as Bloodettes, and DUSHON FOSTER, a/k/a "Jah Bee."

On April 15, 2002, PAULETTE McCARTHA pled guilty to racketeering charges, 2 separate conspiracies to commit murder, and extortion. Judge BUCHWALD sentenced McCARTHA on October 9, 2002, to 144 months' imprisonment.

On March 13, 2003, FOSTER was convicted after an 8-day trial of racketeering and firearms charges stemming from his shooting a 16 year old in the face in retaliation for a gang-related slashing. FOSTER is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge BUCHWALD on July 10, 2003.

Mr. COMEY praised the outstanding investigative efforts of the New York City Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation in this investigation.

Assistant United States Attorneys DANIEL M. GITNER, RONNIE ABRAMS and ELIZABETH F. MARINGER are in charge of the prosecution.

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